

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSERF) Data Collection

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated March 30, 2023

Use of Funds Detail

1. *In the Use of Funds Detail page, where would transportation go?*

Transportation would fit best in Operational Continuity- Other Items or Property.

2. *Our local education agency (LEA) used ESSER 2.0 funds to cover the FFCRA costs (reimbursements for payroll for Covid absences). Can I put those costs under Operational Continuity?*

Yes, Operational Continuity- Personnel would be an appropriate place for that expenditure.

3. *In the Use of Funds Details, where would Verizon Hotspots (wireless connectivity) fit best?*

This would fit best in Meeting Students' Academic...Needs and Other Services.

4. *What is considered "property" in the Use of Funds Details. Is that land and buildings only?*

Property could include things like HVAC, land, buildings, computers, etc. We advise LEAs to include things you would normally put in an inventory under Property.

5. *In the Use of Funds Details, where would architect preliminary work for renovations go?*

Architect preliminary work for renovations would fit best in Supporting Physical Health and Safety- Professional and Technical Services.

6. *What would actual work/construction done on a renovation fall under in the Use of Funds Details?*

Construction would fit best in Addressing Physical Health and Safety- Property.

7. *Where does technology fall in the Use of Funds Detail?*

Technology would fit best in Meeting Students' Academic, Social...Needs under Property.

8. *Would the retention pay noted in Section 3 go under Operational Continuity in the Use of Funds Detail?*

Yes, Operational Continuity would be a good fit for retention.

9. *For contracted substitute teachers, would we place it in salaries or professional and technical services in the Use of Funds Details section?*

Contracted substitutes would fit best in professional and technical services.

10. *Should Guidance Counselors should go under Mental Health or Meeting Students' needs? Where would an Attendance Specialist go?*

Guidance Counselors should go under Meeting Students'...Needs. An attendance specialist would fit best in Operational Continuity.

11. *In the Use of Funds Details, what is the appropriate category to place iPads, software, etc.?*

iPads would fit best in the property category under Meeting Students' Academic, Social, Emotional, and Other Needs. Software would most likely fit best in professional and technical services within that same section.

12. *In the Use of Funds Details, where would you place Indirect Cost?*

Indirect cost would fit best under Operational Continuity—Other Allowed Uses.

13. *Please clarify. ESSER Mandatory Subgrants to LEAs Use of Funds Details will ONLY identify "Expenditures" that have been reimbursed from the State for this reporting period, not what we typically say are expended?*

Yes, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) has stated that an expenditure is incurred by the LEA when the state education agency (SEA) makes a reimbursement for that expenditure with specific funds; the reimbursement date determines the appropriate reporting period.

14. *New: In the Use of Funds Detail page, where would teacher stipends for after-school tutoring go?*

Teacher stipends for after-school tutoring would fit best in Meeting Students' Academic, Social, Emotional, and Other Needs (Excluding Mental Health Supports): j. Personnel Services-Salaries.

15. *New: Can you provide a detailed definition of "Mental Health Supports for Students and Staff," particularly in contrast with "Social, Emotional and Other Needs?"*

For the purposes of this reporting, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) support is provided by non-licensed professionals, and Mental Health services are provided by licensed clinical or medical practitioners or professionals, including psychologists and psychotherapists.

16. *New: We purchased two serving lines for our cafeteria. Would this fit best in Physical Health and Safety?*

Yes, Addressing Physical Health and Safety would be the best fit for this expenditure.

17. *New: Where would you recommend travel and registration to meetings/conferences to be placed in the Use of Funds Details? Would this fit under Other Services or under Professional Services?*

This expenditure would fit best under Other Services.

18. *New: In the far-right column (ARP ESSER Learning Loss), we should report learning loss tagged activities, and in the column to the left of it we should report ESSER 3.0 expenses that are NOT learning loss. You do not list them in both columns if they are for learning loss. Is that correct?*

Yes, that is correct. Expenditures go in only one column or the other.

19. *New:* What can be considered Learning Loss?

We recommend LEAs look at their FY22 ESSER 3.0 application to see what was tagged and approved in the Addressing Learning Loss focus area, and that is what should be used on the data report.

20. *New:* Where would items like touchless water fountains and dehumidifier systems go in the Use of Funds Detail? Would these fit best under Supporting Physical Health and Safety: Property or Supplies?

These expenditures would fit best under Property in Supporting Physical Health and Safety.

21. *New:* Would a mobile classroom unit be considered Property under Supporting Physical Health and Safety?

Yes, Property would be the best place for a mobile classroom unit.

22. *New:* Where should I list desks, chairs, etc. purchased for social distancing?

Those items would fit best in Supporting Physical Health and Safety-Property.

23. *New:* Our LEA used ESSER 1.0 funds to reimburse General Purpose for fuel related to summer learning camp transportation. Where would be the best fit for this expenditure in the Use of Funds Details?

This expenditure would fit best in Operational Continuity- Other Items.

24. *New:* Looking forward, would professional development for social-emotional learning count towards our learning loss expenditures?

Yes, this expenditure can count toward learning loss.

25. *New:* We are utilizing some of our buildings for summer learning camps that are not typically in use. Because of this, we have additional expenses like cooling, electricity, etc. that we are paying for out of ESSER 3.0. Would these expenditures fit under learning loss?

Yes, expenditures related to the cost of running summer learning camps, after-school tutoring, etc. for the purposes of addressing learning loss can count under your learning loss expenditures.

26. *New:* In the FY21 report, we categorized some things slightly differently than the recommendations that I am reading in the FAQ (for example, we put hotspots in Meeting Students'...Needs: Other Purchased Services rather than Other.) Do you recommend categorizing FY22 in the same way we did in FY21 for consistency, or should we move the activity to meet the recommendation in the FAQ?

We recommend categorizing those activities as you did for the FY21 ESSERF report. As a reminder, many activities may fit into more than one category, and ED recommends that LEAs use their discretion in choosing the one that best fits.

Planned Uses of Remaining Funds

27. In the Planned Uses of Remaining Funds section, would we just enter 0 in those boxes if we have already spent all our ESSER 1.0 funds? I currently don't have anything preloaded there.

It would depend on whether the LEA had any remaining ESSER 1.0 funds outside of the reporting period. Remember, the data collection is lagging.

28. My question is referring to the Planned Uses of Remaining funds pages. Since this is for FY22, would I fill this out with what we have spent in FY23 and plan to spend in the future?

Yes, LEAs should look at what they have spent since the end of the reporting period and what they plan to spend in the future to determine these percentages.

29. On the Planned Uses of Remaining ESSER funds, should we put in what we have planned and budgeted for in later ESSERs even if they were not approved during the current reporting period?

Yes, LEAs may put what they have planned in this section; however, it is acceptable to enter zeros here if the LEA did not have an approved plan during the applicable reporting period.

30. New: Under ESSER 1.0, what do we do if it shows our released funds that we did not use?

Please contact your ESSER coordinator with the specific amount of funds released. The relief team will adjust data previously reported to ED during the data correction period.

31. New: In the Planned Use of Remaining Funds section, what amount of money are we reporting?

The remaining funds are those not included in this reporting period, or the previous one, as expenditures. In large part, it is the money that you are currently expending in FY23.

32. New: Our LEA released the remainder of our ESSER 1.0 funds. How would we report those released ESSER 1.0 funds in the Planned Uses of Remaining Funds section?

Since these are returned funds, LEAs should show there is no planned use for funds by entering 0s in the columns on the Planned Uses for Remaining ESSER 1.0 Funds page. The relief team will correct the amount showing as Available ESSER 1.0 Funds later this summer during the FY22 correction period.

Maintaining Safe In-Person Instruction

33. In the Maintaining Safe In-Person Instruction and ESSER Funds to Provide Internet Access sections, the note says, "ESSER refers to ESSER I, ESSER II, and ARP ESSER funds and includes both mandatory subgrants and SEA Reserve subgrants." What is meant by SEA Reserve Subgrants and do LEAs need to include these in our expenditures?

SEA Reserve Subgrants refer to the ESSER Planning and Fiscal Pre-Monitoring grants. Expenditures from these grants will be reported separately from the ESSERF Data Collection. However, if the LEA received either of these and used them for any activities in the Maintaining Safe In-Person Instruction or ESSER Funds to Provide Internet Access sections, they would include them when marking yes/no for the criteria in these sections.

ESSER Funds to Provide Internet Access

34. If we did not provide home internet access, would we include it in the Increased Internet Access section? We did expand internet in parking lots at schools but not at home.

Since the question is very specific to home internet access, we recommend selecting No or choosing Other if the LEA wishes to denote it.

Reengaging Students

35. On the Reengaging Students page, does the question just refer to the applicable reporting period?

Yes, all questions in this report should be based on the current reporting period.

Hiring and Retention

36. In Section 3, subsection B-On the "hiring and retention of specific positions tab", can you relay what is meant by "short-term contractors" and "support personnel". We contracted some work-based learning students to assist with cleaning. Should I list them here?

If the contract was used to support the purpose of the federal grant you would count them. If they worked a specific contract and were paid, count them there.

37. Where would a technician go in the Hiring and Retention of Specific Positions section?

A technician would fit best under Support Personnel- not covered by previous categories.

38. Would we include bonuses in the Hiring and Retention of Specific Positions section?

This section would not include bonuses. This section is for personnel salaries and benefits.

39. In Section 3 - Hiring and Retention of Specific Positions, is that referring to the staff identified in the previous question?

This chart refers to the specific staff listed in the chart. Staff hiring would refer to new positions hired with ESSER funds in these categories. Staff retention would be current staff that has been retained but is now being supported with ESSER funds. For example, some LEAs may have had teachers previously paid for out of GP but are now paid for with ESSER. These would be included in retained.

40. Should Section 3- Hiring and Retention include money we spent on activities we did to support retaining staff?

No, this section is for personnel and salaries.

41. What is meant by "related service personnel" in the Hiring and Retention and Access to Select Staff sections?

This would include personnel who directly provide related services for special education students (i.e., OT, PT, speech, etc.)

42. On the Hiring and Retention page, who is included in "Support Personnel?"

This includes personnel such as bus drivers, custodians, etc. that were not covered in previous categories.

43. In the Hiring and Retention of Specific Positions with ESSER 1.0, ESSER 2.0, and ESSER 3.0 section, if we did not hire any additional staff in ESSER 1.0 or 2.0, only ESSER 3.0, will we enter zeros?

Yes, if the LEA did not hire additional staff using ESSER funds during the reporting period they would enter 0.

44. In the Hiring and Retention section, if you paid summer school from this, does it go in staff hiring?

If you have hired ESSER-funded personnel for summer school during the reporting period, you could include them here.

45. If we used the summer funding from the state and used our own teachers, we would not put those funds in the Hiring and Retention section, correct?

Yes, that is correct.

46. We had three positions that were not paid from the state summer learning money. Do those three positions go in the new hire section of the Hiring and Retention page?

Yes, these would be included in new hires if they are funded from ESSER.

47. Our LEA paid our school secretaries to work an extra month due to the delay of the start of school. Would this be reported under Hiring and Retention of Specific Positions?

No, that section is for salaries and benefits only of newly hired employees, or for retaining if it is a position that would otherwise be lost without the use ESSER funds.

48. We hired two virtual schoolteachers when enrollment in that school spiked due to covid. One teacher we will keep in this position. The second teacher has returned to a regular classroom position. Would I include one or both of these positions in the Hiring and Retention table?

If the teachers were newly hired in those positions during the reporting period, you would include them.

49. Would support personnel include people we hired for sanitizing?

It could. This may depend on how they were hired. For example, if they were hired as short-term contractors they would go in that category.

50. New: Can you please define and provide examples of who qualifies as a "short-term contractor?"

ED defines "short-term contractors" as any non-permanent staff with a limited and specified employment duration. Examples of short-term contractors may include but are not limited to cleaning personnel contracted to disinfect schools during a school year that are not permanent employees of the LEA and mental health personnel contracted to provide services during a summer break that are not permanent employees of the LEA.

51. New: Under Hiring and Retention of Specific Positions, what is considered support personnel, and would ESSER project manager position be considered administrative staff?

Support personnel not covered in other categories could include additional custodians, transportation staff, and anyone non-academic. An ESSER project manager would be considered administrative staff.

52. New: Our LEA only provided school-based FTE counts in the Hiring and Retention section last year, rather than all staff in the LEA. Because of this, our pre-loaded information is incorrect. What should we do to correct this?

The Hiring and Retention section should include all full-time equivalent staff in the LEA, regardless of funding source. If LEAs entered incorrect information in the previous report, they should provide the corrected information to their relief funding coordinator as soon as possible. The relief team will update the LEA's information with the corrected counts during a correction period later this summer.

Allocation of Resources Within the LEA

53. *Is Section 3, Subsection C - Allocation of ESSER Resources within LEA specific to only criteria used to allocate a set amount of ESSER funds to each individual school? Our district did not allocate a set amount to each school but has used and continues to use ESSER funds to address needs across the district at all schools. All students have access to the initiatives that money has been used or will be used on.*

Correct, LEAs would only select Yes if they opted to allocate funds to schools, like what is done with Title I. Most LEAs did not do this, rather held funds at the LEA-level and made spending determinations based on their needs assessment. If the LEA did not allocate funds to schools, they would select No for the each of the listed criteria.

54. *In Allocation of ESSER Resources within LEA, is the amount in c. above what was allocated for all students? We have a very large population of Economically Disadvantaged Students.*

We suggest including anything here that was done differently than what was done for the rest of the LEA. If nothing additional was done for this subgroup of students within certain schools and/or it was something done across the board for all schools, you would mark No. If these are district-wide decisions and not school-based decisions, you would mark No.

55. *On the Allocation of ESSER Resource within the LEA page, is this asking about specifically allocating funds down to school levels, or does it mean that the schools benefitted from allocations, such as purchasing curriculum or cleaning/sanitizing items for all schools?*

This question refers to allocating funds to the school level. If these are district-wide decisions and not school-based decisions, you would mark No.

56. *A follow up to the previous question on the Allocation of Resources within the LEA section...if we spent funds only in one school for a certain improvement, purchase, or service, do we need to answer this regarding those funds?*

No, this decision was made at the LEA level, so funds are not being allocated to the school to determine how they should be spent.

57. *In Allocation of ESSER Resources within LEA section, what is the question asking?*

This question refers to whether schools were given an additional, specific allocation from ESSER based solely on their designation as a Title I school.

Impact of Learning Loss

58. *On the Impact of Learning Loss Section, do we only include the 20 percent we are required to spend or the amount we have actually allocated?*

LEAs should include the amount that has been allocated for learning loss. This would be a minimum of 20 percent of the total allocation.

59. *New: Does this section refer to ESSER 3.0 only?*

Yes, the Learning Loss requirement pertains to ARP ESSER funds (ESSER 3.0).

60. *New: The questions below the 20% amount budgeted line include multiple questions with yes/no responses. These questions only refer to money expended that was included in the 20% amount, correct?*

Yes, that is correct. LEAs are only reporting on the expenditures from FY22 that are included in the 20% learning loss set-aside. If the LEA expended funds on things like mental health in FY22, but they were not part of the 20% set-aside, you would mark No.

61. *New: What is ARP ESSER LEA Reserve?*

This refers to the **required 20% learning loss set-aside in ESSER 3.0. LEAs should provide the** total amount of funds expended **in FY22** from the amount of funds you have reserved for Learning Loss out of ARP ESSER (ESSER 3.0).

62. *New: What are some examples of improved coordination of services?*

Some examples include telehealth for physical health or mental health supports, partnerships with Family Resource Centers, graduation coaches, etc.

63. *New: What is a full-service community school?*

For our purposes, this term means a public elementary school or secondary school that participates in a community-based effort to coordinate and integrate educational, developmental, family, health, and other comprehensive services through community-based organizations and public and private partnerships; and provide access to such services in school to students, families, and community, such as access during the school year (including before- and after-school hours and weekends), as well as during summer.

Access to Select Staff

64. *In the Access to Select Staff section, are these only ESSER-funded positions?*

No, this section should include staff in the listed positions regardless of funding source.

65. *Do we include SPED preschool staff numbers in our FTE numbers in Section 4, Subsection C under the column on Special Educators and related service personnel?*

Yes, SPED preschool staff should be included in this section.

66. In Section 4 the third column says, "school counselor, social workers, or school psychologists." Should we count each of those or does the "or" mean to count only 1 of those?

LEAs should include all these positions.

67. *New:* Under the heading Access to Select Staff and the FTE pages: which report do you recommend we use to assist with these numbers? Comparability?

Yes, we recommend comparability for this page. This does include all staff regardless of funding source.

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions

68. Do the staff FTEs (Section 5) cover cafeteria staff?

Yes, this section should include a total count of employees in the LEA, regardless of funding source.

69. Should we include subs in Section 5?

We do not recommend including substitutes in this section.

70. In section 5, do we use comparability for these numbers or just use that for section 4?

We recommend working with your Human Resource, payroll, and/or finance personnel to pull a total count of employees paid on date listed for each year.

Programming Focus

71. On the Programming Focus page, do we have to select a strategy or activity for every category even if we may not have used it as a focus?

LEAs should select only the strategies or activities that ESSER funds supported during the applicable reporting period. LEAs can select N/A under any category they did not use.

72. On the Programming Focus page, tutoring is listed as its own section but is also under summer and after-school. Where should I mark tutoring?

Mark tutoring in all sections under which it applies. For example, if the LEA offered after-school tutoring and tutoring during the school day mark it in Afterschool Programs and Tutoring.

73. What are the subgroups for School Facility Investments in the Programming Focus section?

The LEA should look at their attendance/EIS and demographic data to determine their specific subgroups covered by facility improvements.

74. In the Programming Focus section under School Facility Investments there is an *. If we didn't spend money during this reporting period, do we have to answer this?

LEAs should enter 0 or N/A in the box if this question does not apply for the applicable reporting period.

75. While we think we know what is meant by transitions, please define your meaning. The transitions question comes from the Programming Focus page.

Transitions would include transitioning from pre-K to kindergarten, SPED students, elementary to middle, and middle to high school.

76. New: On the Programming Focus Page, is that what we focused on during FY22?

Yes, LEAs will answer the questions based on what was done during FY22.

Miscellaneous

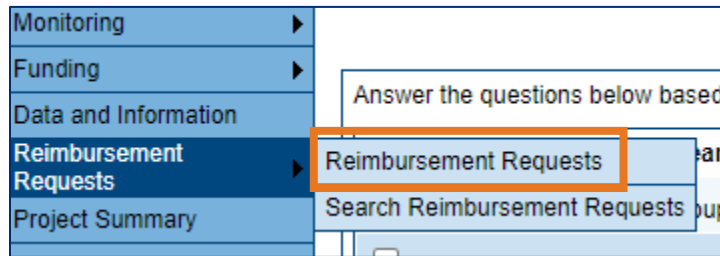
77. Is there a PDF available of the whole report so I can share it with others who might need to gather data for me?

To obtain a PDF of the report, utilize the “Print Selected Items” option on the Sections page to print and save PDFs of all sections of the instrument.

Description (View Sections Only View All Pages)	Validation	Print Select Items
All	Messages	Print
[-] Overview	Messages	Print
Cover Page	Messages	Print
Definitions		Print

78. Where do we find the date to use for our reimbursements in ePlan?

Navigate to Reimbursement Requests in ePlan.



Select FY 2022 and ESSER, ESSER 2.0, or ESSER 3.0.

Search Reimbursement Requests

Organization Name:

Organization Number:

County:

Fiscal Year:

Funding Application:

- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) 2.0
- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) 3.0
- Emergency Assistance Non-Public Schools (EANS)
- Epidemiology & Laboratory Capacity (ELC)

Grants:

79. How can we know what was requested on each reimbursement?

Select the Request Period link on the Reimbursement Requests page, then select Expenditure Details to view amounts requested by specific account and line-item numbers.

80. Do we have to post our ESSERF Data Collection on our district website like we do our other ESSER documents? Also, do we have to have our board approve this document?

LEAs are not required to post this on their website or have their board approve this document.

81. Can you explain what it means by "extended school year"? Is that after school or does this mean making the school year longer?

It can be either. This could also encompass before school hours or any extension of school time.

82. From the guidance regarding categorizing the expenditure in the year the reimbursement was received rather than requested will produce data that has been preloaded to not align with the carryover budgets from one fiscal year to the next fiscal year. How should we address this?

The preloaded amount is taken from an expenditure report in ePlan, so it is more in line with what has been requested rather than received. For this reason, there may be a difference in what was reimbursed vs. what was requested. The report was pulled from June 30, 2022, to be consistent across the state. We are reporting these expenditures over time, and the preloaded amounts will be pulled the same way each year, so all amounts will be accounted for by the end of the grant period. LEAs should go to the reimbursement request and look for reimbursements that were received during the reporting period and go by that each time that you do this report. If you notice that some expenditures are included but are outside of the reporting period, note these to be reported on for next year.

83. When it asks for Current Reporting period for this report it is only referring to FY22, correct?

Yes, that is correct. The reporting period for this report is July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

84. Are the remote learning, connectivity, and reopening grants included in any of the mandatory/SEA Reserve grants?

No, not currently.

85. If summer programs weren't reimbursed until in July - we do not include? We only report on what the district received reimbursement for by June 30, 2022.

Correct, if you did not receive reimbursement until July, it would not be included in this report.

86. Does the ePlan platform for the data collection tool require a 0 in fields that are 0 or can it be left blank?

If there is an asterisk, an answer or amount needs to be entered. If it is not marked as required or does not have an asterisk and the amount is 0, it can be left blank.

87. *New:* In a few places, the instrument mentions SEA Reserve subgrants. Do we report on any of these subgrants?

SEA Reserve Subgrants refer to the ESSER planning and Fiscal Pre-Monitoring grants. Expenditures from these grants will be reported separately from the ESSER Data Collection. However, if the LEA received either of these and used them for any activities in the Maintaining Safe In-Person Instruction or ESSER

Funds to Provide Internet Access sections, they would include them when marking yes/no for the criteria in these sections.

The remote learning, connectivity, reopening, and ELC grants are not included in any of the SEA Reserve grants.

88. *New: What is an example of an SEA Reserve Award?*

The SEA may reserve up to 10% of ESSER 1.0 and 2.0 grants to address emergency needs as determined by the SEA resulting from COVID-19. These emergency needs may be addressed through individual ESEA Reserve Awards.

89. *New: What is a mandatory subaward?*

The mandatory subaward (or subgrant) is the total amount of funds the district has been allocated without a prior application. For ESSER funds, LEAs were awarded their funds and completed their application after the fact.